conversations

1845

Pam Conversations
Near East

on the

middle east



a prayer of intercession

O Lord Jesus our loving Lord, who didst descend to this earth for the sake of the love with which thou hast loved us and didst take to thyself an earthly body in order to save us from eternal destruction, we pray for Egypt. The majority of the inhabitants of our land have not yet believed in thee. Work, therefore, by means of thy Holy Spirit in thy Church that there may appear in her the grace of faith in thee, so that she may become a true center of light shining upon those who are in darkness and the shadow of death. Set our hearts on fire with love of those who are not believers that we may attract them into thy kingdom. Remove from us the stumbling blocks which they find in us, that they may not be deprived of thy blessings. Awaken us with the fervor of thy Spirit that we may awaken those who sleep and may manifest to them the excellence of thy blessed Gospel, and the truth of thy message which thou has granted to the inhabitants of this earth. Bless those who are Christians in name only in this land, that they may become Christians in spirit and in truth in the presence of the Moslems. Let their minds and hearts be enlightened and let their souls be guided. Bless the troubled world and remove from it the woes of war, which have eaten up the green leaf and the dry leaf of cultures and civilizations and virtues. Enough, O Lord thou God of mercy, enough of pain and bloodshed! And answer us for the sake of the Shed Blood. Amen.

This prayer by a convert from Islam, now an elder in a Protestant Church, for his country expresses the concern of committed Christians everywhere for the Middle East. It is quoted from *The World at One in Prayer,* edited by Daniel J. Fleming, and is used by permission of Harper & Brothers Publishers.

contents

INTRODUCTION 4

Section I — THE MIDDLE EAST — As I See It *(Signed Articles)* . . 6

Chapter I THE POLITICAL SITUATION 6
by Eva (Mrs. Charles) Malik

QUESTION: What are the causes of the tension and unrest in the Middle East and what is our responsibility there?

Chapter II THE POSITION OF WOMEN (Zan-I-Irani) . 13
by Turan Ehteshami

QUESTION: How is the place of women in Muslim culture and society changing?

Chapter III THE PROBLEM OF EVANGELISM . . . 19
by E. Everett Grice

QUESTION: Why is it difficult to win followers of Islam to faith in Jesus Christ?

Chapter IV THE PLACE OF THE ANCIENT AND EVANGELICAL CHURCHES . . . 25
by William Haddad

QUESTION: What are the problems and possibilities in developing closer relationships between the Ancient and Evangelical Churches in the Middle East?

Section II — THE MIDDLE EAST — How Do You See It? 30

Study Suggestions—Preparation for the Circle Meeting
Plan of Presentation
Questions for Discussion
Suggestions for Worship
What to Do to Follow Through

Session I 30
Session II 34
Session III 36
Session IV 39
Bibliography 42
Audio-Visual Resources 44
Presbyterians Serve In the Middle East . 46

Introduction

CONVERSATIONS ON THE MIDDLE EAST

It seems peculiarly appropriate that the very year the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. are coming together to form a new church — The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. — the mission study in which we share is the Middle East.

This circle guide deals with an area of the world where the new Church will carry a major responsibility for the Evangelical (Protestant) witness. Almost all the overseas work of the United Presbyterian Church has been in the Middle East — Pakistan, Egypt, the Upper Nile, the Sudan and Ethiopia. These countries, plus the part of the Middle East where the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., has been working — Iran, Iraq and Syria and Lebanon, constitute a vast challenge and responsibility that call for understanding, prayer and support from our newly united Presbyterian family.

Our "Conversations on the Middle East" are based on four signed articles — three written by Christians in the Middle East, and one by a former missionary. Each expresses the author's personal viewpoint on one of the great questions that come to mind as Christians in our country consider their responsibilities in the Middle East.

The questions relate to the political situation, the place of women in the culture and society of the Muslim world, the evangelistic approach to followers of Islam, and the relation of the Evangelical (Protestant) Church to the Ancient Christian Churches.

The signed articles make up Section I. Section II contains study suggestions for each session. Further resources for study are listed, giving additional background material and points of view of others about the questions under consideration.

A bibliography lists the materials prepared by the Commission on Missionary Education for the study of the Middle East. It is hoped that every circle will use Dr. Johnson's book, "Middle East Pilgrimage," in preparation for these "Conversations." The other books listed will greatly enrich the study.

Maps, films, a drama, and accessories from the Wright Studio are listed. Fuller information about these resources and the materials for different age groups will be found in "Tools for Missionary Education — 1958-59" published by the Board of Christian Education and available free through the Presbyterian Distribution Service Centers.

Newspapers and magazines are carrying many articles on the Middle East. Alert the women of your circle early to start clipping and filing these materials as a basis for sharing in the discussions.

There are, naturally, varying points of view on crucial issues in the Middle East. You may not agree with all that the authors of these chapters say. Create an atmosphere of freedom to present and discuss varying viewpoints. Urge that all women in the circle read widely, current books and magazines, in order to have a broad concept of the problems and promise of the Middle East.

Do not stop with discussion of the issues; but consider the implications to us as Christian citizens and as a Christian Church. For each section there are suggestions on "Things to do to follow through." Urge the group to think of other ways of being "doers" as well as hearers and talkers.

Remember, two criteria of a good study are:

(1) It is so *convincing* in the presentation of factual and spiritual truth that old prejudices are removed and new opinions formed, and

(2) *so dynamic* it leads to action.

CHAPTER I

the political situation

by Eva B. Malik

QUESTION: What are the causes of the tension and unrest in the Middle East and what is our responsibility there?

A WORD ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Eva Badr (Mrs. Charles) Malik comes from a long Christian tradition in Lebanon, her grandfather being an early Protestant minister who worked side by side with the first missionaries who went into Aleppo and other parts of Syria.

Eva Badr graduated from the American School for Girls and Beirut College for Women and received her Master's Degree from the American University in Beirut. For a number of years she taught in the field of Arabic history at the Beirut College for Women, and today is president of its Alumnae Association.

A new chapter of her life began when she married Charles Malik, Professor of Philosophy at the American University in Beirut. They came to the United States when he was appointed first Ambassador to the United States from the new Republic of Lebanon. From the beginning Assembly which formed the United Nations, Dr. Malik has played a leading role in the United Nations as well as in international affairs in Washington. He is at present the Foreign Minister of Lebanon.

As the wife of a distinguished diplomat, as a woman whose leadership is recognized in social and educational circles in Lebanon and the United States, and as mother of a son whose future will be influenced by the destiny of this troubled area, Eva Malik's words in the following conversation piece will merit our earnest consideration.

* * * * *

All Eyes on the Middle East

For months now the attention of the world has been focused on the Middle East. The West — and the United States in particular — is deeply concerned. One is not without hope that the cause of freedom will ultimately win. But the hour is late and therefore extreme wisdom and careful planning are urgently required.

An Area of Tension and Turmoil

The Middle East is in turmoil. There is anxiety in every heart. Chaos, confusion, frustration — all not without hope and anticipation — reign in our midst. This fluid situation cannot last long. We are surely emerging into a new era, the character of which is still not clearly determined. It looks as though the war of nerves, at least as far as our part of the world is concerned, is approaching an end; and a real war, or some kind of settlement, is to follow. The question that defies statesmen today — those of the Western world as well as those of the Middle East — is what must be the shape of things to come? To be sure, the situation is one of great complexity, and the stakes are high. To let things drift along as usual is most dangerous. Artificially to introduce or induce stability in the area is not a real solution. High statesmanship, therefore, is called for as never before in history to face firmly and squarely the crisis in the Middle East and to find a solution which is fair to all concerned.

The basic elements in the situation must be very clear to the student and even to the observer of the Middle East these days, for a great deal already has been written — much of it by competent people. Some writings are slanted, to be sure, but it should not be difficult for the careful reader to discern the truth.

Importance of the Area

The Middle East has always been of paramount importance for the Western powers. Russia struggled for centuries to "have a foot in the Middle East" without success. But with her clever tactics of penetration today, Soviet Russia may finally establish herself in the Middle East and spread Communism throughout this whole area. Already she has managed to conclude economic and cultural treaties with several Middle Eastern countries and her relationship with Egypt and Syria is more than just friendly.

The West Sees a Host of Problems

To the West, the Middle East may mean, in a very cold and detached manner, a host of problems that need attention in order to safeguard vital interests in the area and to ward off certain dangers. Strategy, oil,

Israel, various economic and cultural interests, Communist penetration, inter-Arab relations and conflicts, the general Egyptian situation, rivalries among the Western powers themselves, the situation in Syria and the general economic and social conditions in the area — these are the topics of deep concern today which we cannot develop at length here. On each one of them, however, one can find volumes written. It is not difficult, therefore, for one who wants to study the Middle East to find an abundance of material.

But the Basic Element Is the People

But in most of what one reads, the really basic element in the Middle East, as indeed in any other area, is often either altogether missed or inadequately treated — and that is the *human element*. The *people* of the Middle East are little thought of and less loved. When concerned parties from outside deal with the "area" they rarely take its people into account. These people have a chequered history and their geographic location has exposed them from time immemorial to all kinds of conquests and exploitation and all winds of doctrine. These people have absorbed many cultures and their lands served as the cradle of the great living religions, and they have known a tremendous and flourishing civilization. These people have known, also, oppression and suffering and their countries are counted today among the less fortunate in the world and the less developed, in spite of the rich natural resources that some of them possess. These people are beginning to wake up to their plight and in all justice to demand their rights. Confused as they are, these people have their own hopes and aspirations and wish to assert themselves as useful and respected members among the family of nations, and to live decently. These people who are rapidly awakening cannot be ignored, and they certainly deserve every consideration and sympathetic understanding. No *situation* can be treated, no matter how important its elements, without due regard for the *people* who are, as I see it, the decisive factor in any fair solution. At this delicate stage of their history and development, the peoples of the Middle East need love and guidance and help more than ever before. The West cannot detachedly look at an "area" and at "problems" only.

The Crucial Question of Freedom

In their ignorance, as they grope for a happier and more secure future, the danger is that they may turn themselves over to the first flirt and flatterer who intends to use them, and thus miss finding out where their ultimate good really lies.

The question of Freedom is the most crucial factor in the present struggle of people of the Middle East. In the major struggle between

freedom and the dark forces threatening the whole world today, it is highly significant where the Middle East will turn its face. The fear is that many of the peoples of the Middle East, in their frustration and disappointment with the West that has not sufficiently tended to their human needs and aspirations in its long association with this area, may fall an easy prey to the luring promises of Communism and thus lose sight of the most precious thing they possess — their individual freedom. Communist agents find out what the masses want and cater to those desires. For instance, under the guise of supporting Arab nationalism which some Arabs want, they penetrate into a country. They champion the cause of the discontented everywhere and they spread their well-known slogans, which appeal to the emotions of people.

Quick Action Needed

While people are wavering and are being pulled in one direction or another, and while the situation is *still* fluid, the great appeal to the West now, and in particular to the United States, is to act and act soon, basing their action this time on a proper understanding of the people. For once *people* are won over and loved, it becomes very easy to solve jointly every problem for the common interest of all.

Positive Features in Middle East – U.S. Relations

When leaders in the Middle East make desperate appeals to the West for help, it is because: (1) They have faith in the values of the West which are a part of the heritage of this part of the world. (2) They know that the West can and is willing to help. (3) They also have faith that the people of the Middle East are easy to win over and befriend. (4) And finally, they know that the interests involved for both sides are great and serious. It is therefore inconceivable that we can admit defeat. Something has been wrong so far about the method of approach to the people of the Middle East.

Again, when special appeals are made to the United States of America for help, it is because the people of the Middle East have a great faith in the people of America, in spite of the spread of anti-Westernism — the reasons for which we need not go into now — and in spite of Israel. (1) The relationship between America and the Middle East for more than a century has been of a purer kind than the political. It has involved education, Christian missions and philanthropy, and the confidence gained in the American motive to help is great. (2) The people of the Middle East know the great American tradition which lays so much stress on the humanitarian aspect of things, and know the humanitarian tendencies of the American people.

(3) The people of the Middle East know also that America leads the world today and they look up to her with great expectations. (4) America has the technical knowledge and the means to apply it wherever she wants. (5) They know America is committed in the Middle East (strategy, oil, Israel, NATO and the Eisenhower Plan) and therefore cannot be disinterested. All this makes us see that the people of the Middle East and of America need each other; that the field for cooperation on various levels is great and challenging; and that the forces that try to pull them apart, like Communism and Zionism, must not be allowed to succeed.

Mutual Needs

We also see that the United States cannot in all fairness to herself and to the Middle East take an attitude of indifference, nor treat the situation as an emergency that will be dealt with only so long as the world crisis is on and then will be forgotten. America is in the world to stay and to lead, for all kinds of political, economic and moral reasons. The sooner, therefore, she cultivates and regains the friendships of people who really love her and have confidence in her, the better for the peace of the world.

This is not a one-sided affair. It takes great statesmen and inspired leaders on both sides to work out a strategy for the development of the Middle East, based on honest cooperation and real partnership.

The Middle East does not lack leaders who are pro-West. Nor has the West been wanting in its good intentions toward the Middle East. The United States is certainly spending a lot of money in this area, but is not reaping full results. What is lacking, I think, is a proper understanding of the human element. Partnership, which the churches are stressing today in America, is the right clue. It is for America to bear in mind certain basic facts about the people of the Middle East, and for the people of the Middle East to understand the American way of doing things. Without this understanding, and without the right approach, which must be based on mutual trust, we shall keep going around in circles as we are doing now, and Communism will reap the benefits.

The Need for Understanding

In dealing with the Middle East situation the following basic points must be kept in mind:

1. Islam must be understood in its essence and not superficially taken for granted only. It is the most determining factor in dealing with the people of most of the Middle Eastern countries. And since it constitutes the political, social as well as the spiritual outlook of these people, it cannot be overestimated.

2. There is a general awakening in the Middle East as well as a general rising of the masses, which cannot be overlooked.

3. People are bent on politics in this area. Political intrigue and the newspapers keep them perpetually excited and often confused. The political trends are many and intricate. There are many political parties. Some call for a general unity of all Islamic-Arab countries (the Arabists). Some believe in the political unity of geographic Syria (the Syrian National Party). Others believe in the absolute independence of each state in the Middle East (Phalangists of Lebanon). But they believe in full interstate relationships and cooperation such as is the case in South America. Since there are real differences and disagreements among these existing states, unity cannot take place. In addition to the local political parties and ideas there is foreign interference. Thus, there are those who are pro-Western and those who are Marxists and are increasingly entangling themselves with Communism, which is fast penetrating into this area on all levels. And there are still those who are taking notice of the rise of Asia and Africa and tend to admire, for instance, Indian leadership and take great pride in the Bandung Conference. In the midst of these intense political tensions and the general war of nerves which involves the whole world, the individual in the Middle East is frustrated and stands in danger of losing sight completely of both the truth and his freedom. Here is where help is truly needed.

4. The people of the Middle East are fully aware of their backwardness and are earnestly seeking to improve their social and economic conditions.

5. People in this area crave security and are tired of the instability that seems to be their plight. They demand justice.

6. They are friendly and generous people. They expect to be treated on an equal basis. They resent having things imposed on them by force and are afraid of exploitation. Although most of them recognize their weaknesses, they still desire help to come to them on the humane basis of love and respect.

7. Last but not least, one dealing with the Middle East today must not forget the most complicating factor in the situation, namely, the sudden imposition of the State of Israel upon the Arab world. The Arabs consider Israel an aggressor and can never forget the injustices done them by "the tragedy of Palestine." To them, Israel with her wild ambitions is a constant menace. The enormous number of Arab refugees from Palestine (about a million) dispersed all over the Arab world, is a constant reminder of this problem. Added to all of that, the miserable condition of the refugees makes them a hot bed of Communism. In

every conflict between the Arabs and Israel, the United States seems to favor Israel, which keeps Arab-American relationships under a constant strain. Unless the Arab-Israeli problem is treated with absolute justice, there is little hope for improvement in the Middle Eastern situation.

If the U.S.A. takes her role of leadership in the world seriously, and if she accepts her commitments in the Middle East, then it is obvious that quick ways and means of effective help in the area are called for.

A Patient Partnership

When the right kind of personnel of both the Middle East and the U.S.A. work together — i.e., men and women who love and understand the people in this part of the world and their problems — when efficient agencies are set up for spending money and planning projects for the Middle East, and when coupled with dollars and technical assistance there is a new vigor on the part of the West to articulate their convictions and make people believe in freedom and the moral and spiritual values of life, then a new dawn will shine upon us.

The Greatest Need — LOVE

The process of this new approach of partnership based on mutual faith and common beliefs, is not easy. It will take patience and long-suffering and a determination to deal adequately with the dangerous situation in the Middle East. Time is running short and we cannot work fast enough to make up for past negligence.

For the Christian, nothing is impossible or hopeless. What a Christian can do in the face of such tremendous issues is to love — and in loving, he will begin to understand and will give expression to that understanding by bringing whatever pressure he has to bear on the powers concerned to act humanely and justly.

CHAPTER II

the position of women

ZAN-I-IRANI *(Iranian Woman)*
by Turan Ehteshami
(Too-rahn Eh-te-shahm-eé)

QUESTION: How is the place of women in Muslim culture and society changing?

A WORD ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Miss Turan Ehteshami is the daughter of a Christian doctor. Both of her parents have been active in the Church. She was educated in a Christian Girls' School in Hamadan and taught for a time in a Christian school in Isfahan.

She is now teaching in Teheran and participates in the life of the Church there. Several years ago Miss Ehteshami visited the United States on a government touring fellowship and left a fine impression on Christian friends whom she met here.

° ° ° ° °

Unveiled!

On one of the cold winter days of January 1935, a new page was added to the history of our nation. The woman who for centuries had lived a well-protected and slow-moving life at last was permitted to go *unveiled.*

The late king, Reza Shah, started this movement by taking his queen and princesses with him for the opening of the first Normal School in Teheran. Women, who for years had been awaiting the chance, entered into a new era of life. Not only the opportunity for education, but for higher education was granted to them, and some even started working in offices.

Women were struggling to stand on the still-weak legs of their new liberty when World War II took them by surprise. It was so sudden that it gave them no chance to strengthen the roots needed if they were to assume the great responsibilities which in recent years women have been expected to carry.

Western customs poured into the country. The "bad" as well as the "good" stormed our quiet community life. And all so unexpectedly.

The Hazard and Hope of the New Era

Iranians, who had been brought up with different background, beliefs, ideas, customs and culture, could not easily understand and put into practice in all the phases of their lives that which was so new and unfamiliar. This unexpected invasion of the West resulted in definite changes in our social order. People lost interest in most of their own traditions, moral standards and even in their religion. The pattern of their behavior changed — the *old* giving place to the *new*. The new was entirely without precedent. It offered the attraction of newness and relief from the old invisible bindings. People caught in this whirlwind of change had no control over themselves. Particularly women, who for centuries had been denied all recognition, found in it the chance to become popular. The subject of their new importance became the popular topic of the day.

What promise does this new development hold for the women of Iran, that they are ready to fight so hard for?

1. It promises the equality of boys and girls.

2. It opens the doors of colleges, and offers higher education and careers for girls.

3. It allows women in the community to develop their personalities — enjoy their rights — secure positions — take part in various activities.

4. It gives them the right to choose their husbands.

5. It gives them new social opportunities such as joining clubs, attending meetings — even organizing new clubs if they wish to do so.

6. It holds for them the promise of self-dependence and the freedom, in the future, that Western women now enjoy.

The Traditional Attitude Toward Woman

A country whose people for thousands of years have lived differently and developed different values in everything from social life to religion for its women will find it difficult to accept these new ideas. The following anecdotes from our everyday life will give the reader a better understanding of the situation:

1. "This operation will cost $50 (400 rials)," said the doctor to the husband of his patient — a pregnant woman who was dying. "With that amount of money I can buy a younger wife, Doctor. Don't bother about her. God's will be done. If she *has* to die, she will die," answered

the tribal man from the palm groves of the Persian Gulf Coast.

2. A little girl, hearing the neighbors talk about the "thief" that had gone to her uncle's house, ran to her mother for an explanation. "Whenever a girl is born among us Zoroastrians," her mother explained, "we use this expression."

3. "How is your baby boy?" asked the lady of the gardener's wife. "I am sorry to say, lady, that the baby is a girl, and since she was born three months ago we are ashamed of telling the truth to others," replied the unhappy mother.

4. Only the other day the well-educated principal of a high school in Teheran, when her daughter left the house, turned to the others present and said, "Although I am one of seven sisters, and have a daughter who has proved smart enough to become an engineer and take care of herself, I still wish she were a boy."

5. There is no man prostitute. The simplest mistake of a girl — even to be seen walking with a boy — is enough excuse for her to be sent away from her father's home and counted as lost.

6. In the constitutional law everyone can vote in the parliamentary elections except children, criminals, idiots — and WOMEN.

7. There are still men who are ashamed of talking about their wives, who will use many other expressions instead, such as: "Our house," "the mother of the sons," "our weaker sex," etc.

In spite of all this, the Iranian woman has tasted the fruit of freedom; she understands the meaning of equality and is seeking it. Mothers are trying their best to provide chances of study and opportunities to bring their daughters up independent of men. Books, magazines, movies, radio and simple travel have opened women's eyes and awakened the girls to what can be achieved. It is not easy any longer, therefore, to get them to accept the old pattern.

Caught in the Conflict Between Old and New

The struggle between the *old* and the *new* has widened the gap that has already existed. Family problems, and worry on the part of the parents when social controversies arise, are common occurrences. The old accuse the new (modern) of being irreligious and immoral, and condemn them for imitating others. On the other hand, the extreme modernists scorn the old and call them reactionary, backward and traditional.

Although years have passed since our women were unveiled, there are still thousands of women all over the country who refuse to walk in the streets without the black veil (Chador).

The use of the veil is a slap in the face for those women who now walk in the street with bare neck and arms and their hair uncovered.

Today our nation as a whole — and our women particularly — are going through an era of transition. The younger generation is caught in a dilemma. On the one hand is the young, gay and adventurous life that is seen or heard about; on the other hand, the loyalty to the traditional religious home life that upsets the normal mental balance. While seeing and hearing of the modern life, our young woman still must practice the old. And while naturally rejecting the imposition of the old way of life, she cannot achieve what she desires.

Why is this so? The reasons are suggested by the following short analysis:

1. The suddenness of the change deprived people of the chance to understand fully.

2. Lack of knowledge and experience of the *unknown* frightened them from full acceptance.

3. Lack of sufficient means and materials to satisfy the "hunger" of the undeveloped minds, has resulted in a vacuum.

4. Lack of right principles for living is puzzling.

5. Lack of leadership and guidance has left people on their own, with no certain knowledge about which way they should turn.

Building new attitudes and practicing new ideas need time and patience, of which our women have had too little to date.

New Privileges Involves New Responsibilities

Iranians, when they agreed to accept Western civilization, thought they could be selective. They expected to avail themselves of some of the conveniences — dressing like other women, enjoying a similar social life, sharing their equality of rights — and to leave out the rest. They took it for granted that they could enjoy the freedoms without accepting the responsibilities. It was fun to earn money and stand on an equal basis with the men, but they forgot that they would have to observe the rules of partnership.

How to Bridge the Gap?

Sociologists believe the giving of big doses of Western civilization in every phase of life will prepare the mind to receive.

The *educators* have nothing to offer the present generation, but they hope to improve the situation by preparing the mind of the younger generation for a better future.

I, *as a Christian*, believe in individual values and in the importance

of the human being in the sight of God. I realize, also, that Western civilization is founded on the principles of Christianity. Therefore, I can fully understand the reactions of our women. Personally, I do not feel any gap and I am not lost, because my faith has given me solutions to overcome our social problems.

The Christian Hope

So far, Christians everywhere have failed, in some ways, to help the people of the world. The failure of Christians notwithstanding, Christ has not failed, and we have no right to cease trying to fulfill our ideals.

One of the surest ways of challenging this situation is to improve the chances for young girls to broaden their concept of Western civilization. This is a slow process, but it must be done. The Western women who have the opportunity must take the responsibility for helping the women of the non-Christian world.

Christians Should Share the Root as well as the Fruit of Their Faith

I have been asked to express my personal opinion as to how Christianity can help in the foregoing situation. Following are some suggestions to my fellow Christians:

1. They should study their own religion more carefully, with full understanding of its application to the lives of others.

2. They must feel responsibility for being the model, and remember that "if the salt goes bad, the whole world will lose its flavor."

3. They must provide the history of pioneer achievements and detailed biographies of the women who, for the *cause,* have sacrificed their own time and pleasure for what they believed to be right.

4. They must let others, especially non-Christians, see and feel the Christian faith as the highest and most essential factor of life.

At first, Western civilization and ideas were admired and accepted because they were presented by those who genuinely believed in religion and in its influence on civilization. Recently, however, it seems that Westerners who visit our countries are more attracted by our traditions and ideas. This new attitude of ignoring religion in order to become more popular and friendly appalls us Christian women of the East. When there is a direct relationship between friendliness and keeping one's principle, why pretend?

Is it too much if we ask the Church to give more emphasis to religious values and activities? Once a well-educated Iranian girl from Peabody College was proudly telling of her experiences in the U.S.A. to a group

of educators. "Churches in America have got over their religious prejudices and are dealing with the social needs of people." She had enjoyed attending those church activities because she did not feel they represented something religious, but only something social in which she was taking part.

Once I was genuinely surprised to find out that a specialist in women's activities was merely interested in awakening the desire among our rich and carefree ladies of Teheran for the right to vote. In my opinion this movement should be one of the least pastimes, because whenever our women are well enough educated to prove their capabilities, men cannot help but recognize them.

It is high time for the Christian women of the world to realize that the Christian spiritual values are not something that can be outmoded or ignored. The standard is the highest, and holds an everlasting challenge for all of us.

CHAPTER III

The Problem of Evangelism

by E. Everett Grice

QUESTION: Why is it difficult to win followers of Islam to faith in Jesus Christ?

A WORD ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Dr. E. Everett Grice served as a missionary of the United Presbyterian Church in Egypt from 1923 to 1948. Since returning from the field he has been on the staff of the Board of Foreign Missions of the United Presbyterian Church as Personnel Secretary. He brings to the new United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. keen insights into the evangelistic mission of the Christian Church in the Middle East.

° ° ° ° °

Need for Knowledge

The reasons for the difficulty of evangelizing in Muslim lands lie inherent in the very nature of the two great religions, Islam and Christianity. To understand better the nature of these difficulties will help but by no means completely solve our problems. This understanding will, however, be a call to patience and sympathy in a far greater degree than has usually been evident in our missionary work among Muslims. There are certain things which Muslims and Christians should know about each other which, if known, would make for a better mutual feeling and good will.

The Muslim Is Not a Pagan

First of all, the Christian, especially the Western Christian, should know that the Muslim has a religion, a culture and a history of which he is justly proud. The Muslim is not a pagan. His religion is one of the five greatest religions of the world, with millions of followers in many lands. He has a holy book, the Koran, which he believes to be inspired as completely as the most fundamental Christian believes his Bible has been inspired of God. The Muslim believes that three holy books have come from God, — the Old Testament, the New Testament and the

Koran. He honors our holy book and expects us, therefore, to honor his.

Moreover, out of this book has come a fully developed religion. This religion has been developed by keen analytical and competent minds. The Schools of theologians and commentators are impressive and the science of their theology compares well indeed with that of Calvin or Luther. Religious practices such as the keeping of fasts, the prayers, the pilgrimages, feasts, sermons and observance of religious and moral obligations are all a vital part of Islam today.

Culture of the East Compares Favorably with Our Own

Out of this Book and this religion has also grown a culture. If we give the Muslim the privilege here of putting the best things of his culture on the counter for display, as we like to do when we consider ours, he will get along fairly well indeed by way of comparison. For example, the Muslim is graceful, polite, courteous, hospitable, generous and courageous. There are ladies and gentlemen among Muslims, as among all people. He is an excellent conversationalist and can discuss with you acceptably and intelligently such subjects as politics, social trends and their significance, world problems of today, science, literature, religion and philosophy. Western culture, referred to by most Americans as "The American way of life," finds competition here in the culture of Islam which is, in fact, a Culture of the East. Of course, this is when each is displaying its best. If you probe deeper and ask him what of the Muslim attitude toward women he will immediately counter with a question as to the meaning of the appalling divorce rate in America today and ask if our modern movies are a portrayal of Western ideals.

The Muslim also has a history of which he is justly proud. This is especially true of the Arab and the fact that most Westerners including Christians are either ignorant of, or have a wrong view of, this history has been a most disturbing factor in missionary effort.

A Proud History — Gibraltar Derived Its Name from a Muslim General

The first outspread of Islam in its early years was an accomplishment of which Muslims are rightfully proud when history is read in the light of those times. The conquering of the great and powerful Persian nation wonderfully equipped with the most modern arms of its day, by a horde of Arab tribesmen with inferior weapons and the crudest military training and tactics was the great beginning. From then their advance was steady and complete. First they took the Middle East — Palestine, Syria and Iraq of today. From there they spread into Egypt and across North Africa; then across the straits into Spain. One hundred years after the

death of Mohammed the domain of his Caliph at Damascus reached from China to Spain. In fact, here is where Gibraltar got its name. The Muslim General who made the crossing was named Tariq. They named the huge rock that marked the site of the crossing Mount Tariq (Gebel Tariq, in Arabic) so Gebel Tariq came to be called by westerners, "Gibraltar."

Then on into Spain they spread, more slowly now but surely, relentlessly onward, westward, eastward, northward. At the end of seven years, Spain, one of the fairest and largest provinces of Medieval Europe, belonged to the Muslim Caliph at Damascus. The conquerors were there to stay for centuries, and these centuries of the Arab Muslims in Spain were to make a cultural contribution to the Western world down to our day.

Arabic-Speaking Peoples Made Possible Renascence of Western Europe

"Between the middle of the eighth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries, the Arabic-speaking peoples were the main bearers of the torch of culture and civilization throughout the world. Moreover, they were the medium through which ancient science and philosophy were recovered, supplemented and transmitted in such a way as to make possible the renascence of Western Europe."*

All this and much more can be said in praise of the Muslims' religion, culture and history, but most of it is either unknown or ignored by most Western Christians. This can only make evangelizing more difficult.

Lack of consideration of the above mentioned facts, together with wrong impressions of the Muslim, especially the Arab of today, create an attitude toward Muslims which not only is wrong, but which does not make for friendship, without which evangelization is always impossible.

Lack of Understanding of Arab Muslims

The attitude of the people of America to the visit of the King of Arabia who came as a friend is an illustration of this point. Moreover, one looks almost in vain to find one good word for the present ruler of Egypt in our newspapers and magazines. When people differ there is usually right as well as wrong on both sides. In all fairness, can there not be something good said about this man, who is not an avowed enemy? The fact is that in the pages of history there cannot be found mentioned a ruler of Egypt who has made such a vigorous effort to lift his people out of poverty and improve their condition. True, it may be said that much of what he has done may not be enduring. It may not be

*Philip Hitti, *History of the Arab* (MacMillan 1937) p. 557.

based on sound economic policy. Yet much has been accomplished that is worthy of praise and merits our friendly help and interest. It may be said that we do not approve of certain international political moves that have been made. We also do not approve of some of the moves made recently by Britain and France, yet we have gone out of our way to let them know that we have not lost our friendship and respect for them.

This critical attitude among Christians is not directed toward all Muslims quite as much as it is to Arab Muslims perhaps. We do seem to show a little more friendly attitude toward the Muslims of Indonesia, Pakistan and Turkey, and yet there is something in our attitude toward the religion itself which can be felt. Someone has said that the missionary is in a constant dilemma. He must learn to respect the very thing which he is there to replace, namely the religion of the people to whom he goes. The missionary soon learns that his personal disapproval of the religious practices of the people to whom he goes, even though not expressed, is felt and sometimes hurts. This is a delicate matter. A good opinion of people must be attained and kept if we are to help them.

Another area of difficulty lies in the opinion the Muslims have of Christians. The misunderstanding here is even greater. This, again, applies particularly to Western Christians.

Puzzled by Western Christians

First, the Muslim misunderstands our attitude toward religion. To him, religion is a matter of nationality. He misunderstands completely our strident emphasis on the separation of Church and State. How can they be separated? For him, religion runs in his very blood. Neither does he find it easy to understand why all Americans, except perhaps some missionaries, absolutely refuse to discuss religion. The diplomat, the businessman, the tourist, all seem almost frightened lest they get into a religious discussion. He would be glad to talk on this subject frequently. He would argue, yes — but not necessarily to the point of enmity or even the destruction of a friendly atmosphere. He gets the impression, somehow, that Americans especially just don't care very much about religion.

American Way of Life, Manners, Moral Values, Misunderstood

Second, he misunderstands our way of life, our manners and our morals. He believes us to be extremely materialistic and careless of moral values. The latter seems to be due to three causes — the freedom of women in the West, our advertising and our entertainment, such as our reading matter and our movies. Add to this his opinion that all Christians drink alcohol and bow down and worship idols in their churches, both of which are expressly forbidden in the Koran, and you

can see he has a very unflattering opinion of us who come to preach to him this gospel.

Crusades, Colonialism and Military Conquest Influence Muslim Attitude Toward Christianity

Another factor in the Muslim's attitude toward Christians is found in the Crusades. That which seems to most of us like a page out of ancient history is to him a living reality. He has read far more about them and remembers it better than we do. That is because his forebears were both the victims and the final victors in this unhappy episode of history. He looks upon the Franks as ruthless invaders who were finally cast out of Arab lands.

Historically, one more barrier lies between us. Colonialism, no matter how benevolent, rankles and military conquest is always odious to the conquered and ruled. The records of history are full of unfortunate and unforgotten incidents.

When Napoleon landed in Egypt and was marching toward Cairo, his advance forces were met by a force of valiant Mameluke Cavalry who were routed by their first experience with European gunfire.

"Baffled, they withdrew. Then one of them arrayed in his Saracen chain armour rode back to the Frenchmen waving a huge crusading sword and challenged them to select an officer with sufficient courage to meet him in single combat. A bullet pierced his forehead." The age of chivalry was dead.*

Now that the hand of the colonialism which followed Napoleon is lifted and the new nationalism burns fierce in the world, the Western Christian has new problems as a messenger of Christ.

Brighter Future! Muslim Respects Our Bible and Our Lord

However, there is a brighter side and hope for the future. The Muslim has a respect for our Bible and our Lord. He is eager to know more of the true Biblical message, and numberless Muslims are reading the Bible searchingly today.

The Muslim also respects democracy in its best sense and the Western ideals of liberty, equality and freedom. One gets the feeling that he wants to be our friend, and will be when we have learned how to bridge the gap between us.

They Lack the One Thing Needful

For us, the necessity of bridging this gap is found in the fact that with all the good there is in their faith one thing is lacking — they know

*Wood Jarvis, *Pharoah to Farouk* (John Murray, London, 1955) pp 84, 85.

not the Christ as Saviour and Lord, but merely as a prophet. The validity of His death on the cross is destroyed for them by a Christian heresy which found its way into their faith — that He did not die on the cross at all, but that God placed a vision there in His stead and snatched Him away to Heaven. As Paul said of his beloved Hebrew people, so we can say of the Muslims whom we love, "I bear them record that they have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. . . . For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." Romans 10:2 and 4.

CHAPTER IV

the place of the ancient and evangelical churches

by William N. Haddad

QUESTION: What are the problems and possibilities in developing closer relationships between the Ancient and Evangelical Churches in the Middle East?

A WORD ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

In the land of Lebanon from which Mr. Haddad writes, many Christian Churches, including the Maronite (now related to the Roman Catholic Church), the Greek Orthodox Church, and other ancient Churches of the East, existed for centuries before the Protestant missionary movement began.

The early missionaries desired to cooperate with these churches, which had become ingrown under the pressure of Islam, and to help them attain a new vitality and outreach. But when little response resulted, many individuals left the older Churches and formed new Evangelical churches.

Mr. Haddad is a member of one of the Evangelical churches of Lebanon. Today he serves as Secretary of the Bible Lands Union for Christian Education, which seeks to unite both Orthodox and Protestant forces in the Middle East in a witness through church schools.

* * * * *

A Continuing Church Since Pentecost

The ancient churches in the Middle East are as old as Pentecost, for it was in Jerusalem that the first Church council was established and, in Antioch, the followers of the New Way were first called Christians. The growth and spread of the churches in these lands have undergone many ebbs and tides. Strife and persecution from within and without,

conquest and opposition and mass slaughter came with these new and opposing faiths, overturning the established, replacing the known with the as yet unfamiliar. But the Church of Christ in the Bible lands has survived; never since its founding in the first century have Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, been without the Christian Church.

On the Defensive

However, the fact that the Church has lived in lands dominated by a militant non-Christian faith has brought about an attitude more defensive than missionary. Churches have over generations become ingrown, self-centered, indeed bogged down to a state of mere existence, with hardly a sign of the triumphant, hopeful missionary spirit indicative of the Body of Christ. Even in the times of the Crusades there was not a revival in the things of Christ. Granted, the Christian government and army provided freedom of action on the part of the Church but the opportunity was not, unfortunately, seized upon to the honor and glory of Christ and the spreading of the Gospel. No sooner were the Crusades wound up as a military and political action than we find the churches shrinking back to their sanctuaries, rallying just enough to bear the brunt of the brutality of the conquering enemy.

No Reformation Influence

When the schism within the Church occurred in the 11th century, the Churches in the Middle East remained in the main within the jurisdiction of Constantinople. This is important to remember because when the Protestant Reformation began it had to grapple, as it were, with the Roman Church. Churches in the Middle East were not in the jurisdiction of Rome and consequently practically nothing was felt in this area of the Reformation in Europe until the 19th century.

Modern Missionary Movement

Early in the 19th century Protestant Missions from the West began to operate — in Palestine, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Persia, Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf Protectorates. Schools and hospitals were opened. Publication of religious books and particularly the Bible was undertaken. Evangelism was the dominant concern. The main effort of these missions was to confront people with the Gospel, and this was dangerous. At first the ancient Churches and for that matter the Muslim community, looked with favor upon the civic services and welfare work of the missions — the educational, the medical, even the cultural. But inasmuch as these were integral to the preaching of the Word, and such preaching exposes the delinquent, a measure of opposition and antagonism began to be felt.

Changing Attitudes

When people began to ponder the Word of God, they started asking questions — about their own lives, about the Church, and about their leaders. The ancient Church failed to respond positively. If it had done so, the Church of the New Testament would have been born again in the Bible lands. Instead it began to intimidate its members against having anything to do with these "Fifth Columnists," the Protestants who were "sheep stealers." Of course the Protestant work, in which nationals joined with missionaries, did not stop, but rather it was intensified and expanded. Gradually, however, it became clearer and clearer to much of the leadership of the ancient Churches that the Protestant work was not meant to be maliciously subversive. They began to look at themselves in the light of the Reformation. "These rituals, the icons, the incense and scores of symbols cannot be ends in themselves," they began to say; "they must denote something deeper, some spiritual significance," and so set about uncovering them.

Youthful Hope

The truest expression of this development is the Orthodox Youth Movement which came into formal existence about fifteen years ago. Their program includes Bible study and church history, and extensive Christian education through week-day and Sunday schools. They keep clear of administrative intricacies, personnel rivalries and politics. As their chief executive, Father Khodr, has put it, their main concern is God's policy. When this policy is pursued faithfully, other problems resolve themselves. The movement operates within the Church. Indeed few of its leaders are ordained to the holy ministry. They are well versed in the Bible, the history of the Church, the lives of the Holy Fathers. They are conscious of this great heritage and are eager to awaken the congregations to its implications. In organizing choirs at church services they have imbued in them a sense of needed worship.

Barriers to Close Ties

Such being the aims and program of the Youth Movement, a co-operation with other church groups, notably the Protestants, is natural. Gradually it is working that way, but we cannot be unmindful of decades of suspicion and friction when Protestants were accused of taking the Orthodox Church as their sphere of operation and "stealing" away their members. Evangelism should be directed to the Muslims, *they* would contend.

Another factor is a kinship which for generations the old Churches have established with their sister churches in Russia. As the Protestants in these lands look to America and England, and the Uniate (Roman

Catholic) Church looks to France and Italy, so the Orthodox Church looks to Russia as Guardian. The uninformed layman fails to discern the onslaught of Communism and its effect upon the Church. What he still lulls himself with is a perennial glory of the Orthodox Church that is in Russia. When Russia is at loggerheads with America, the masses are sentimentally with Russia, not because they are Communists but because of these ties alluded to. In that guise, Communism has found more than a listening ear amongst members of the old Churches here. These are residues in the minds of the Orthodox people which time and modified strategy on the part of the Protestant Churches and Missions will eliminate. Furthermore, rapid and widespread education is proving an eye-opener to many so that a discerning of what is Christian and what is not from one country or the other, is being exercised. The Missions may not be looked upon as tools of the politics of their countries and the National Protestant Church may not be foreign. The developmental process is slow and the sediment of the past is still not completely cleared out, but already there are many evidences of honest, heart-to-heart teamwork between them.

Areas of Co-operation

An important evidence of this is the realm of Christian education, on youth and children's levels. From as early as 1925, with the establishment of the Bible Lands Union for Christian Education, Orthodox participation has been active. In 1948 a Christian Youth Federation was founded and the Orthodox Youth Movement has a leading part with ten other Christian youth societies. There are work camps being organized — some local, some ecumenical. When a river flooded over sections of Tripoli causing much material damage and loss of life, fifty young people responded overnight to a week's salvage work at great cost to their safety. And when an earthquake hit parts of Lebanon last year, another team hurried to help restore not only damaged houses but the fallen spirits of the whole population of one distant village. These and other activities such as spiritual retreats, conferences, publications, aid to refugees and exchange of visits and information have cemented our common faith in our One Lord and Savior and have served to prepare the ground for future work in the service of Christ. In many respects cooperation has passed the stage of experiment to that of experience, and with new avenues of "coming-togetherness," such as the Near East Christian Council will afford, new ventures may be envisaged to the end that these people may be won to Christ and join the family of God.

A Common Witness Needed

In these days when nationalism is rampant, when false ideologies

pose as godsends, when other religious faiths take up the sword, the Church of Christ can ill afford simply to look on. Must it be the Church in the West that takes the initiative, or the Church in the Near East? I would say the Church of Christ, wherever it may be found. It is impractical for the Churches in the West to work without the fullest cooperation in deed and spirit of the Church in these lands. It is inconceivable that the Churches in these lands struggle without the aid of the Churches abroad. But agencies like the Bible Lands Union for Christian Education, the Christian Youth Federation, and the Near East Christian Council are media through which a common strategy may be worked out.

We must frankly and realistically deal with the situation as it is now so that we may be able to make it as it ought to be. The situation as it is places the old Churches on surer ground as to their identity with the nation, the Protestant Church only recently so. This is being said because the nation has a number of problems with the Great Powers, notably the U.S.A. and Great Britain. Though a chief cause of trouble, Communist Russia somehow escapes being indicted.

Wrong Ways

Can the Church of Christ rebuild damaged bridges? Yes, but not in the way chosen by some "one or two-men Missions" who have come recently to these lands, hiring interpreters, distributing old clothing, but dividing rather than working with the Church. Not only do these brush aside the old Churches and Missions, but they speak ill of them, too. So here we have zealous workers who, through lack of appreciation of the situation, do disservice to the Cause and bring no honor to the Lord.

Right Ways

There are already in existence in these lands the media to pursue the kind of activities that have proven rewarding. Let us have more and better work camps, publications, spiritual retreats and conferences, relief work for refugees, more speaking and praying together, more courageous witness to the Gospel. Let us stand for the right across national, racial and denominational lines, for when we do so, not only will the Church be renewed from within, but those outside will be converted. May the Lord hasten that day.

study suggestions

Session I — THE POLITICAL SITUATION

> QUESTION: What are the causes of the tension and unrest in the Middle East and what is our responsibility there?

A. In Preparation for the Circle Meeting —
READ and THINK ABOUT:

1. Chapter I of this guide
2. *Middle East Pilgrimage,* by R. Park Johnson

CHAPTER I — Along the Line of March
1. Simple Village and Complex City
2. What Is the Middle East?
3. The Arab World
4. Minority Peoples in the Middle East

CHAPTER II — Journey Through the Ages
1. Birth of Arab Nationalism
2. Dream of Arab Independence
3. Palestine — the Much Promised Land
4. Mandate of a Divided Arab World
5. The Crucial Question of Palestine
6. Partition, War and Refugees

CHAPTER III — Roadways of the New Pilgrimage

1. Common Factors in the Life of the Middle East
 Influence of the West
 Nationalism
 Problems in Attaining Democracy
 Under-developed Resources
 Social Awareness and Economic Opportunity
 The Appeal of Communism
 The Tradition of Islam

2. Diversity in the Middle East
 Perplexities in the Middle-Eastern Mind

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES *(for those wishing to do wider reading)*

The Call of the Minaret, by Kenneth Cragg

Chapter 1 — Islam since 1945
Chapter 7 — The Call to Understanding
Chapter 9 — The Call to Service

The Middle East — Its Religion and Culture, by Edward J. Jurji

Chapter 1 — The United States and the Middle East
Chapter 2 — Inside the Middle East
Chapter 9 — The Middle East and World Peace

New Voices, Old World, by Paul Geren
Chapter on Dr. Charles Malik, husband of the author of Chapter I of this guide.

Islam Inflamed, by James Morris

B. A Plan of Presentation of Chapter I, at the Circle Meeting: Ask one of your group to present the material as a woman of the Middle East who has been invited to your circle to talk with you about this question.

C. Some Questions for Discussion at the Circle Meeting:

1. What difference might it make in U. S. policy in the Middle East if we look at the situation through eyes of loving concern for the people and their problems rather than through eyes of enlightened self-interest?

2. What are the positive factors in good relations and mutual understanding between the Middle East and the United States?

3. What are some of the negative factors?

4. A missionary who has served for many years in Egypt says, "I feel very certain that there is at present no greater hindrance to the entrance of the Gospel of our Lord into the Muslim world than the bitter conviction in that world that the whole of the Western Christian world is shying away from any just solution of the 'Palestine Problem,' for reasons of expediency in the internal affairs of their own nations."

 Mrs. Malik expresses one point of view on the Arab-Israel situation and our relation to it. Do you agree with this analysis? If so, why? If not, what is your analysis of the situation? On what do you base it?

D. Worship Suggestions

Scripture — I Corinthians, 13 (Phillips' translation)

*Hymns — "Oh brother man, fold to thy heart thy brother. . . ."
(403;1-4)

**"Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round. . . ."
*(406;1-4)***

"Where cross the crowded ways of life. . . ."
(410;1-4)

QUOTATION FROM DR. CHARLES MALIK:

"There is nothing in God's creation that falls outside the scope of His providence. Through the trials and sufferings and ambiguities of the moment, God may therefore be ripening for us a new heaven and a new earth. . . . As we trust Him in the work of His creation, we should all do our humble part according to the little light and opportunity granted to each one of us, for we also are not an insignificant part of His creation.

"Even if we only see now as in a glass darkly the contours of the new earth, let this defective vision be compensated for by an amplitude of faith. The merit of faith is greater

*From: *The Hymnal* Published by Authority of THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA—1933; Philadelphia, Presbyterian Board of Christian Education: 1950.

**It is suggested this hymn be *read*.

than the desert of sight. Let us, then, keep on praying, hoping, believing, loving, learning, at the feet of One without whose entry into history . . . and without whose Lordship over history . . . what happened and happens . . . has neither meaning nor issue."

E. What to Do to Follow Through

1. From time to time action is taken in the United Nations and in the United States Congress, related to the political tensions in the Middle East. Watch for such developments and encourage positive and constructive action. Urge your Congressmen by personal letter to stand for a just solution and to see that the people themselves are not forgotten. Insist that our Government support the United Nations in its efforts to bring about a just solution.

2. The plight of nearly 1,000,000 Arab refugees — victims of the political situation (half of them under fifteen years of age) — is a challenge to Christian concern. What can we do about it?

 Here are a few suggestions:

 a. Study the report of the Conference on Arab refugees held in Beirut in May, 1956, arranged by the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Churches. (Available from the International Missionary Council, or the World Council of Churches, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, for 50¢.)

 b. Gifts to the *One Great Hour of Sharing* help these people.

 c. Relief clothing can be sent to Church World Service for Arab refugees.

3. Pray for peace, justice, truth and freedom in the Middle East. To the end that these might be achieved pray that the citizens of the United States and their government may have the courage to forget political expediency and *do* justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God and man.

Session II — THE POSITION OF WOMEN
ZAN-I-IRANI *(Iranian Women)*

> QUESTION: How is the place of women in Muslim culture and society changing?

A. In Preparation for the Circle Meeting —
READ and THINK ABOUT:

1. Chapter II of this guide.
2. Get books from your local library on women in the Muslim world.
3. In 1954-55, Dr. Ruth Woodsmall made a study under the sponsorship of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women entitled, "The Role of Women in Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Syria." The study may be obtained from that organization for $1.00. The address is 52 East 44th Street, New York City.

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES:

a. If available, reread the feature article in *Time* magazine of November 17, 1957, on "The Emancipation of Moslem Women."

b. Biographies of Christian women of the Middle East in *New Voices, Old World,* by Paul Geren.

c. *The Call of the Minaret,* by Kenneth Cragg, includes in Chapter I a section on women in the Islamic world.

d. *Caught in the Middle,* by Glora Wysner, will explain some of the problems of Muslim girls in this day of transition.

B. A Plan of Presentation of Chapter II at the Circle Meeting: Dialogue between Iranian and American woman about position of women in society in their respective countries — past and present.

C. Some Questions for Discussion at the Circle Meeting:

1. What factors have resulted in greater change taking place in the lives of Muslim women in the last ten years than in the preceding ten centuries?

2. What are the dilemmas and dangers in the sudden transition?

3. Is accepting Western ways necessarily the right answer for the women of the Middle East?

4. What responsibility do we as Christian women in America have toward our sisters in the Muslim world?

5. What biographies of women would you include in a book to challenge and inspire women of the Muslim world to make their full contribution?

D. Worship Suggestions

Scripture — Proverbs 31:10-31
Luke 1:46-55
Luke 23:54 — Luke 24:11
Mark 16:1-11

Hymns — See *Thine Is the Kingdom . . . and the Glory* — Chapter IV, (On Giving Yourself in Praise) for a list of hymns in the *Presbyterian Hymnal* written by women. Among these are:

"Thou Life Within My Life" (320)
"Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak" (399)
*"We Praise Thee, O God" (461)

E. What to Do to Follow Through

1. *Be friends* to women students from the Middle East in your area.

2. Through gifts to the Benevolence Budget of your church and to Presbyterian Women's Organizations assist Christian educational institutions, hospitals, community centers, etc., in the Middle East which serve women of the area and help prepare them for the new life opening before them.

3. *Understand, appreciate, share* the Christian convictions that are the basis of woman realizing the fullest potentialities of her personality in service to God and mankind.

*It is suggested that this hymn be read.

Session III — THE PROBLEM OF EVANGELISM

> QUESTION: Why is it difficult to win followers of Islam to faith in Jesus Christ?

A. In Preparation for the Circle Meeting —
READ and THINK ABOUT:

1. Chapter III of this guide.
2. *Middle East Pilgrimage,* by R. Park Johnson

CHAPTER IV — Road to Mecca

1. Varieties of Religious Faith
2. Road to Mecca
3. Career of Muhammad
4. Muhammad's Choice
5. Expansion of Arab Empire
6. Diversity of Allegiance to Islam

CHAPTER V — A Christian View of the Meccan Road

1. Strengths of Islam
2. The Silences of Islam
3. Christianity in the Muslim Mind
4. Religion in the New Pilgrimage

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES:

The Call of the Minaret, by Kenneth Cragg

Chapter 2 — God, There Is None Save He
Chapter 3 — Muhammad His Apostle
Chapter 4 — Prayer and the Religious Life in Islam
Chapter 5 — The Islamic Order for Human Society
Chapter 6 — Mosque and Meeting
Chapter 9 — The Call to Retrieval

Chapter 10 — The Call to Interpretation
Chapter 11 — The Call to Patience

The Middle East — Its Religion and Culture — Edward J. Jurji

Chapter 3 — Islam: Religious Tradition
Chapter 7 — Impact of Protestant Christianity

New Voices, Old World, by Paul Geren
Biographies of Christians of the Middle East

Introducing Islam (new edition), by J. Christy Wilson

"*Mission to the Moslem Heartland*", by William Wysham and Edward Grice (a leaflet on the work of the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. in Muslim lands). Order from Presbyterian Distribution Service Center — 10¢ each.

The World's Great Religions — book form of series of articles from *Life* magazine.

A Faith for the Nations, by Charles Forman in *The Laymen's Theological Library* series has excellent material on the reason a Christian must make his witness even as he respects the religious heritage of others.

B. A Plan of Presentation of Chapter III at the Circle Meeting:

Islam is launching a great missionary crusade itself and winning converts rapidly in some parts of the world. Have one person impersonate a missionary for Islam seeking to win a convert. Another person, as a Christian missionary, presents the unique claims of the Christian faith.

C. Some Questions for Discussion at the Circle Meeting:

1. Why is it important for one who would evangelize the Muslim to understand and appreciate his cultural and religious heritage?
2. Do you believe one can truly respect another religion and

at the same time press without compromise the claims of Jesus Christ?

3. What are some of the "stumbling blocks" as a Westerner seeks to present Christ to the Muslim?

4. What does the Christian faith have to offer the Muslim which his own religion lacks?

5. Should missionaries be sent to Muslim lands? Why? or Why not?

6. Why has the medical and educational witness been particularly important in the Middle East?

D. Worship Suggestions

Scripture — II Corinthians 4:1-10 (Phillips' translation)
or
II Corinthians 5:11-21 (Phillips' translation)

Hymns — "Send Thou, O Lord, to Every Place" (383)
"From All That Dwell Below the Skies" (388)
"Thou Whose Almighty Word" (392)

E. What to Do to Follow Through

1. *Pray* for the Christians in the Middle East, many of whom have confessed Christ at great personal sacrifice.

2. *Pray* that missionaries and the Church in Muslim lands may be winsome, persuasive and persistent in their witness even when the response is slow.

3. *Pray* that the dream of a Christian broadcasting station may be realized so that the Gospel might reach into homes. (Use: The Year Book of Prayer — Presbyterian, U. S. A. The Prayer Cycle — United Presbyterian)*

4. *Study* more deeply Muslim culture and religion and think through how you would make your Christian witness to a Muslim student in your community.

5. *Read* with your family the biographies of Christians in the Middle East (*New Voices, Old World,* by Paul Geren).

*Available for 1958. A new combined book available for 1959.

Session IV — THE PLACE OF THE ANCIENT AND EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

> QUESTION: What are the problems and possibilities in developing closer relationships between the Ancient and Evangelical Churches in the Middle East?

A. In Preparation for the Circle Meeting —
READ and THINK ABOUT:

1. Chapter IV of this guide.
2. *Middle East Pilgrimage,* by R. Park Johnson

CHAPTER VI — Is Christianity the Way?

1. The Christian Church in History
2. Muslim Conquest and Christian Minorities
3. Survival of the Church
4. The Sectarian Division of Society
5. The Silent Centuries
6. The Advent of Protestant Missions
7. The Early Strategy of the Christian Mission
8. Results of Early Missionary Labors
9. Problem of Proselytism
10. Current Trends in the Eastern Church
11. Churches and the New Pilgrimage

CHAPTER VII — Highway of the World Christian Mission

1. Developing Strategy in the Christian Mission
2. New Patterns of Approach to Non-Christians
 Forms of Direct Evangelism
 Service to Human Need
 Toward a Missionary Church
3. Developing an Indigenous Church
4. How can the Mission Be Less "Foreign"?
5. The Middle Eastern Church and the World Mission Highway

CHAPTER VIII — Throughway into the Future

1. The Direction of the Middle East Pilgrimage
 Will it be Communism?
 Will it be Islam?
 Will it be the West?
2. The Key Role of Christianity
 The Demonstration of Moral Principle
 The Foundation of Moral Principle
 Truth will Emerge where Liberty Prevails
3. The Opportunity of the Evangelical Church
4. The Patience of the Pilgrim

APPENDICES B — Divisions of the Ancient Eastern Church

C — The Evangelical Mission and Churches in the Middle East.

SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCES:

The Middle East — Its Religion and Culture — Edward J. Jurji

Chapter 4 — The Eastern Churches: Origins

Chapter 5 — Four Christian Traditions

B. A Plan of Presentation of Chapter IV at the Circle Meeting:

A visitor in the Middle East talks with two students — one from the Ancient Church, one from the Evangelical (Protestant) Church, about the reason for the existence of the two churches and the hope for closer cooperation between them.

Someone in the group, having become interested in the question of this chapter, has written to a friend in the Middle East, and is sharing the answer which has come in a letter from William Haddad.

C. Some Questions for Discussion at Circle Meeting:

1. Why did Evangelical Churches grow up in the Middle East where there has been a Christian Church since the first century?
2. It is obvious from this chapter that some fresh approach should be made by Protestant Christians to Orthodox Christians in the Middle East. Do you think it would be possible to join our forces in the task of evangelism, forgetting old differences?
3. What are the problems involved in developing closer ties between these branches of the Church?
4. Do you think missionaries from the "younger churches" (such as the Church of Christ in the Philippines) have a place in lands of Ancient Christian Churches? If so, what might be their distinctive contribution?

D. Worship Suggestions

Scripture — Acts 11:19-26
Acts 13:42-49
John 17:3-6; 16-23
Ephesians 4:1-6

Hymns — "O Little Town of Bethlehem" (121)
"Joy to the World" (122)
"As With Gladness Men of Old" (135)
"The Church's One Foundation" (333)
(The Christmas hymns will be especially appropriate if this study is used at your December meeting, as it will be in many groups.)

E. What to Do to Follow Through

Study further the problems and progress in cooperation between Orthodox and Protestant Churches, particularly through the World Council of Churches.

If there are Orthodox Churches in your community, visit them, make friends with the people, and seek to understand where we are alike and where we differ.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Reading List of Books Published by the Commission on Missionary Education for Interdenominational Study.

Middle East Pilgrimage, R. Park Johnson

A basic resource book presenting the position of Christianity in the Middle East. Dr. Johnson is Field Administrator of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., in the Middle East. Price, Cloth $2.95; Paper $1.50.

New Voices, Old World, Paul Geren

Popularly written biographies of Middle East Christians. The biography of Dr. Charles Malik and biographies of several women are included. Price, Cloth $2.95; Paper $1.50.

The Lands Between, John Badeau

A well-organized, popularly written source book on the geography, history and peoples of the Middle East, written by the head of the Near East Foundation. Price, Cloth $2.95; Paper $1.75.

Adult Guide on the Middle East, Y. Armajani

A Study Guide written for use with the basic books. Price 50¢.

Introducing Islam, J. Christy Wilson (New Edition)

(Contains a new map of the Islamic countries.) Price, 60¢.

Fun and Festival from the Middle East, Rowland

Games, festival ideas, recipes, and other entertaining resource material from these countries. Price, 50¢.

This Is the Middle East, John Blumberg

Picture book on this area of the world. Price, 60¢.

Caught in the Middle, Glora Wysner

Problems of Middle East youth. Price, Cloth $2.95; Paper $1.50.

A Tool in His Hand, Ann Harrison

Biography of a Christian doctor. Price, Cloth $2.95; Paper $1.50.

The above books, published by Friendship Press, are available at your Presbyterian Distribution Center or from the Bookstore of the United Presbyterian Church, 209 Ninth Street, Pittsburgh 22, Pennsylvania.

A Bibliography on the Middle East is available from the Presbyterian Mission Library, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Other recent Books recommended for additional resource:

The Call of the Minaret, Kenneth Cragg, New York, Oxford University Press, 1956, 357 pages, $6.25.

The Middle East — Its Religion and Culture, Edward J. Jurji, Philadelphia, The Westminster Press, 159 pages, $3.00.

The Tumbling Walls, Marion and Edwin Fairman, Philadelphia, The United Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. Price, Cloth $2.50; Paper $1.50. A book of travel and adventure through the Middle East, illustrated by 24 pictures of the people of these countries.

A Faith for the Nations, Charles Forman, Laymen's Theological Library, Philadelphia, Westminster Press, $1.00.

Islam Inflamed, James Morris, Pantheon Books, 336 Sixth Avenue, New York, 1956, $5.00.

There Goes the Middle East, Alfred M. Lilienthal, Devin-Adair Co., New York, 1956, $4.00.

Palestine Is Our Business, Dr. Millar Burrows, Yale Divinity School, Published by Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1949, $2.50.

Pamphlets

Pamphlets on the Middle East are available through the Press Departments of the Embassies of the Middle Eastern countries, from the American Friends of the Middle East, 47 East 67th Street, New York City (annual subscription), The Arab Information Center, 120 East 56th St., New York City 22, which publishes "Information Papers" and The Palestine Arab Refugee Office, 801 Second Avenue, Room 801, New York 17, New York.

AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES

Films

"Village Reborn" — Filmstrip on literacy work in Egypt. About 70 frames. With reading script — $5.00.

(In preparation:) — 28½ minute movie in color, *on the Middle East.*

Maps

Political Map of the Middle East. In color. Shows physical features. 45 x 30 inches, large, 75¢. Small maps, 50¢ per dozen.

Map of the World. Highlighting the world-wide mission of the Church by pinpointing important ecumenical centers. In six colors, 50 x 72 inches. Price $4.25.

Into All the World Together — Map and text describing work of Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. and United Presbyterian Church.
Free to 20 copies; additional copies 10¢ each.

Drama

The Khanum and Her Treasures, Grace Visher Payne.

Story of a family in Iran whose members represent the various forces at play in the Middle East today. Three women, two men, three teenage girls. Price, 50¢.

Accessories

Colorful accessories are available from the Wright Studio, 5335 Ohmer Avenue, Indianapolis 19, Indiana. These include:

Middle East Caravan Puzzlemat, sketching on four panels major events in the history of the Middle East.

Middle East Napkin, illustrating contributions of the Middle East to the Western world.

Middle East Program Cover, designed to be folded several ways for various uses — note paper, place cards, favors, program or year book covers.

Table Decorations — cardboard camel standing 10½" high, a donkey 5½", Muslim favors (a Muslim on his prayer rug).

Creative Uses of Middle East Accessories — Ten cents per copy.

(For prices and order blanks contact Wright Studios.
Order supplies of these accessories direct from the Wright Studios.)

Presby Bookroom 209 (T)

PRESBYTERIANS SERVE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Institutions in the Middle East served by the United Presbyterian Church:

Hospitals — EGYPT

Christian Hospital	Tanta
Assiut Hospital	Assiut

Schools — EGYPT

COLLEGES

American College for Girls	Cairo
Assiut College	Assiut

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Tanta Girls' School	Tanta
Ezbekia Boys' School (conducted by the Church)	Cairo
Pressly Memorial Institute for Girls	Cairo
Luxor Girls' School	Assiut Luxor

PREPARATORY SCHOOLS

Mansura Girls' School	Mansura
Benha Girls' School	Benha
Beni Suef Girls' School	Beni Suef
Fayoum Girls' School	Fayoum
Luxor Boys' School (conducted by the Church)	Luxor

PRIMARY

Fowler Home for Girls	Cairo

Schools — NORTH SUDAN

Girls' Boarding School	Khartoum North
Commercial High School	Omdurman
Boys' Boarding and Day School	Omdurman

There are schools of lower grade in Atbara, El Obeid, Wad Medani, Gedaref.

For further information on these institutions and those who serve in them see the *Prayer Cycle of the United Presbyterian Church,* 1958.

Institutions in the Middle East served by the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.:

Hospitals and Clinics

Clinic of Hope	South Teheran	Iran
Colton-Kirkwood-Whipple Hospital	Tabriz	Iran
Lilly Reid Holt Memorial Hospital	Hamadan	Iran
Christian Hospital	Resht	Iran
Westminster Hospital	Kermanshah	Iran
The Christian Hospital	Meshed	Iran
Hamlin Memorial Sanatorium	Near Beirut	Lebanon
Kennedy Memorial Hospital	Tripoli	Lebanon
Deir-Ez-Zor Hospital	Deir-Ez-Zor	Syria

Schools

Community School	Teheran	Iran
American School for Girls	Baghdad	Iraq
Beirut College for Women	Beirut	Lebanon
Near East School of Theology	Beirut	Lebanon
American School for Girls	Beirut	Lebanon
Tripoli Boys' School	Tripoli	Lebanon
Tripoli Girls' School	Tripoli	Lebanon
Gerard Institute for Boys	Sidon	Lebanon
Sidon Girls' School	Sidon	Lebanon
Nabatiyeh Girls' School	Nabatiyeh	Lebanon
Aleppo College	Aleppo	Syria

Centers

Teheran Evangelistic Center	Teheran	Iran
Iran Bethel Community Center	Teheran	Iran
Alborz Foundation	Teheran	Iran
Christian Center Evangelistic Project	Meshed	Iran
Good Shepherd Center	Resht	Iran
Christian Youth Hostel	Mosul	Iraq
Bible School	Mosul	Iraq
Protestant Student House	Beirut	Lebanon
Jibrail Rural Fellowship Center	Tripoli	Lebanon

For further information on these institutions and those who serve in them see the *Year Book of Prayer for Missions* of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

In addition, Presbyterians have an interest in Christian schools and institutions sponsored by the Evangelical Churches of these areas.

Following January 1, 1959, all of the institutions previously served by the two churches will be combined in the interest of and encouraged by the gifts from the new United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. through its Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations.



Circle Study 1958

Board of Foreign Missions
Board of National Missions
Board of Christian Education
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
The Women's General Missionary Society
of the United Presbyterian Church

Price, 20 cents; six for $1.00

Printed in U.S.A.

602-82M—1958